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# Inside Information

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of Agriculture

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and Public Affairs

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## YES, THERE WILL BE A YEARBOOK

For awhile there was talk of eliminating the yearbook of agriculture.

The Administration suggested that cutting the yearbook this year could save \$5-600,000.

But the House Appropriations Committee didn't buy the idea. At a recent hearing on Capitol Hill, committee members made it clear that there would be a 1985 Yearbook of Agriculture.

So preparations in USDA's Office of Information are now underway full speed--about 6 months after staffers might normally have started.

Leading the charge is the Special Programs Division.

At the request of Larry Marton, of that division, the Department's International Information Coordinating Team met April 8 to make the necessary plans. The theme of the yearbook tentatively is "U.S. Agriculture in a Changing World."

Committees of the team, made up of information directors from USDA agencies that deal with economics and international relations, are outlining chapters and listing prospective contributors.

Marton says their goal is to have the yearbook published by Dec. 15.

## THOMAS NAMED ACTING CHIEF IN PHOTOGRAPHY

Theodosia T. Thomas, visual information specialist in the Photography Division of USDA's Office of Information, has been named acting chief of that division.

Byron Schumaker, who was chief of the division, has moved to a new post as visual information officer in the Publishing Division of OI.

A member of the Photography Division staff since 1971, Thomas has been in charge of the production of filmstrips and slides sets, creating many of them herself.



## PUBLIC PRINTER TO ADDRESS PAC

Ralph E. Kennickell, Jr., Public Printer of the United States, will address the Public Affairs Council of USDA on Tuesday, April 30. As usual, the meeting will begin at 11 a.m.

Kennickell will discuss the "new demand-driven, service-oriented organization that is the Government Printing Office," according to an aide.

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## PANEL PLANS PAC MEETINGS

An ad hoc committee of USDA information officers is working on improving the content and format of the biweekly Public Affairs Council meetings of the Department.

Chair is Stan Prochaska, chief of the Special Programs Division of USDA's Office of Information. Other members are Kevin Murray, assistant director, Office of Information; Larry Quinn, chief, Video & Film Division, Office of Information; Don Girton, director of Forest Service's Office of Information; Bonnie Whyte, deputy director of information, Food and Nutrition Service; and Sally Michael, public affairs officer, World Agricultural Outlook Board.

The Public Affairs Council comprises USDA agency information directors. It meets every other Tuesday morning in Washington, D.C. Anyone may attend.

Two recent meetings followed the committee's recommendations for content and format. The first dealt with the issues management system of the Forest Service information staff. The second discussed progress among USDA information shops in computer-assisted electronic communication.

At both meetings, Sally Katt, public affairs specialist in the Special Programs Division of the Office of Information, was facilitator.

In both instances, a leader introduced the subject, and then those attending broke up into groups to develop discussion and respond to questions. General discussions closed out the meetings.

Future meetings will assume formats appropriate to the subject, Prochaska said.

PAC meetings have been scheduled for every other Tuesday for the rest of the year, beginning April 16.

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## GETTING YOUR MESSAGE ACROSS

Three division chiefs of USDA's Office of Information have announced the availability of their expertise and facilities to help USDA officials at the level of the offices of Assistant and Under Secretary and agency administrator in getting their message across in media interviews.

Offering a 90-minute crash course at a time yet to be set in May are Jim Lafferty, News Division chief; Larry Quinn, Video & Film Division chief, and Jim Johnson, Radio & Television Division chief.

More intense one-on-one courses will be available as a follow-up, Lafferty said.

Details on the service will be announced at the April 16 Public Affairs Council meeting.

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## INFORMATION STAFFERS HELPING 4-H YOUTH

Information staffers of both Extension Service and USDA's Office of Information are busy the week of April 15 working with some of the 300 young people attending the National 4-H Conference in Washington, D.C.

Stu Sutherland and Judy Rude, of ES Information and Communications, are coordinating communications support for the conference.

Betty Fleming, coordinator of the USDA Teleconference Center, will instruct a select group of 4-H'ers named 4-H Ambassadors, in teleconference techniques and coordinate for them an audio teleconference with extension communications staffs in four states.

In addition, two other OI staffers, Brenda Curtis, radio information specialist, and Marci Hilt, public affairs specialist, will teach the young people interviewing and presentation skills.

4-H Ambassadors are teen leaders selected, one from each state, to act as spokespersons for 4-H, Extension, and USDA at State, regional, and national functions to stimulate greater understanding, particularly of the unique partnership between private and public sectors.

One team of three 4-H'ers selected for their interest and skills in communications will tape an "A Better Way" show with OI's Deborah Janifer, the producer of "Down to Earth", as interviewer.

Patricia Loudon, ES Information staffer, will take the trio next to a meeting with Kevin Murray, assistant director of OI, and other OI managers.

They'll also tour OI's Design Division and radio facilities.

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## HISPANIC MEDIA PROFESSIONALS TO MEET

The third annual National Hispanic Media Conference will be held April 24-28 in Tucson, Arizona.

Phil Villa-Lobos, Hispanic Public Affairs Specialist with the News Division of USDA's Office of Information, will be attending.

Chairperson of a Washington, D.C. group of media professionals called the Hispanic Public Affairs Association, Villa-Lobos said that group hopes to come away from the national conference with a commitment to form a national Hispanic media association.

Villa-Lobos said that, while there are two dozen Hispanic media organizations in this country, there is a need to form an association of those associations in order to provide a bigger voice in seeking professional advancement for Hispanics and minorities in communications.

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## AUDIOVISUAL REVISIONS COMING

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has issued revised regulations to guide Federal government agencies in creating and distributing audiovisual materials.

Jim Johnson, chief of the Radio & Television Division of USDA's Office of Information, and audiovisual manager for the Department, will distribute a copy of the amended OMB circular soon to USDA agency information heads and other audiovisual control officers.

In effect, the rules are designed to strengthen controls the OMB put in place in 1978, when Circular A-114 was issued.

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## NEW FEATURE ADDED TO 'USDA ONLINE'

Ever noticed a wire story or other piece of juicy information on "USDA Online" and wished you could share it quickly and easily with a friend?

Now you can do just that.

A new feature has been added to USDA's electronic news and information service, "USDA Online," provided through the computer time-share services of ITT Dialcom Inc., by USDA's Office of Information.

Users of the service may now "mail" news releases, crop reports, daily news summaries, etc., available through "USDA Online," to others on the Dialcom electronic mail system.

Here's how it works: When you scan the releases within any category, such as News, Regional News, CRB, FAS, AGam, etc., you'll get the computer prompt "Read or Mail which ones?" after the scanning is completed.

If you just want to read selected items, simply enter the number carried beside each heading scanned. But, if you want to mail any item, then enter MAIL and the number (or numbers) of items to be mailed.

At the next prompt, "To:" enter the mailbox name or ID to whom you want the item sent. Then you'll get a "Subject:" prompt, where you'll enter whatever you want to call it.

Now, at the next prompt, "Text:" enter .LOAD STORY. In seconds, the computer will respond with "xx lines loaded." At this time, enter .S, and the computer will tell you that the item has been sent, and to whom.

At this point, the computer will return you to the "USDA Online" prompt, "READ or MAIL which ones?" Then you can continue reading, mail another item, or enter QUIT if you are finished, STOP if you want to select another "USDA Online" menu item.

One further bit of information about this new service. You can enter your comments before you enter .LOAD STORY (after the "Text:" prompt), or after the computer says "xx lines load." and before you enter .S. This in case you wish to explain to the intended receiver why you are sending the story, or what you expect them to do with it after they receive it.

This new addition to "USDA Online" has brought a full merger of the electronic mail and electronic information dissemination services on the same system.

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## MORE DESIGN SEMINARS PLANNED

An encouraging response to its first seminar for USDA agency personnel in Washington, D.C., has the Design Division of USDA's Office of Information planning early follow-up seminars.

More than 100 attended the first session in late March.

A slide show explained the services of the division. Then division personnel described their new billing procedures, exhibit shipping facilities and computer graphics capabilities.

It was the latter which spawned plans for another seminar in the near future, one that will focus entirely on computers.

Also under consideration are mini-seminars on exhibits, monthly periodicals, newsletters, and other publications.

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INSIDE INFORMATION is published for distribution to public affairs and information staff members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, its agencies, state departments of agriculture and land grant universities. Any items, comments and inquiries should be addressed to either John Crowley or Nancy Bevis, Office of Information, Room 536A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250 or to AGRO09 mailbox on the Dialcom system, or call (202) 447-7454.

